THE SIMON SILVERMAN PHENOMENOLOGY CENTER 31st ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM
presents

Merleau-Ponty
Into the Future

April 29-30, 2013
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Africa Room, Student Union

www.duq.edu/phenomenology
Merleau-Ponty
Into the Future

Over 50 years after his death, we may be still only beginning to know Merleau-Ponty’s thought and its significance for the contemporary world. While historical research into Merleau-Ponty’s thought is crucial, the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center’s 31st Annual Symposium on “Merleau-Ponty Into the Future” will take a different approach. We will ask not what Merleau-Ponty’s thought was or even is but what it might become. Merleau-Ponty will be brought into conversation with registers such as aesthetics, psychology, ecology, geopolitics and feminism. We will explore how Merleau-Ponty’s thought might flower anew in such fields, and how such registers might themselves take new directions through engagements with the possibilities opened by Merleau-Ponty’s thought. We invite you to join us for this exciting exploration.

HISTORY AND MISSION

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center was founded in 1980 under the direction of Profs. Amedeo Giorgi and John Sallis as an expression of the phenomenological orientations of Duquesne University’s graduate programs in philosophy and psychology. The Center proudly bears the name of Mr. Simon Silverman, who was its first major benefactor. The goal of the Center is to promote and facilitate original phenomenological research and thereby add to the corpus of literature in all disciplines, especially in continental philosophy and psychology as a human science.

The Center also serves as a campus hub for numerous intellectual activities that complement graduate programs in philosophy, psychology, theology and communication and rhetorical studies. Internationally, the Center is known for its annual sponsorship of a spring symposium and the André Schuwer Memorial Lecture Series of the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP). The center’s activities are to advance phenomenology in breadth and depth. All of the center’s symposia acta are published.

RESOURCES

The collections of the center form part of the special collections at Duquesne University’s Gumberg Library. Located in an attractive setting, the Center holds a vast collection of world literature on phenomenology, which expands yearly to incorporate new publications. Alcoves and collections house the personal libraries and papers of renowned phenomenologists, including Erwin Straus, Aron Gurwitsch, Stephan Strasser and Amedeo Giorgi. Also available for consultation are the Moser transcripts of Heidegger’s Marburg lectures, F.J.J. Bultendijk’s “Pensée Repensées,” and Husserl’s unpublished transcribed papers. The center is an official branch of the Husserl-Archives (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven).

MANY THANKS to the following individuals who assisted with the organization of the Center’s symposium and the design of the Center’s promotional materials:

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Schedule

Monday, April 29 - Africa Room

Opening Session, 9:00 a.m. - Noon
9:00 Introduction
   Jeffrey McCurry, Director
   Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center
9:05 Opening Welcome
   Charles J. Dougherty, President
   Duquesne University
Moderator
   Eva Simms
   Professor of Psychology
   Duquesne University
9:10 Laura Doyle
   Paper: Les Écarts Géopolitiques: Futures of the Global Past
10:00 Comments
   David Abram, Galen Johnson, Gail Weiss
10:30 Refreshment Break
11:00 Reply
   Laura Doyle
11:15 Discussion
12:00 Lunch

Second Session, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Moderator
   Jessica Wiskus
   Associate Professor of Music
   Duquesne University
2:00 Galen Johnson
   Paper: On the Origin of Truth in Art: Reading Merleau-Ponty’s Aesthetics Forward
3:00 Comments
   Laura Doyle, David Abram, Gail Weiss
3:30 Refreshment Break
4:00 Reply
   Galen Johnson
4:15 Discussion
5-6:00 Reception
   Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center
   Gumberg Library – First Floor

Tuesday, April 30 - Africa Room

Third Session, 9:00 a.m. - Noon
Moderator
   Lanei Rodemeyer
   Associate Professor of Philosophy
   Duquesne University
9:00 Gail Weiss
   Paper: The Normal, the Natural and the Normative: Merleau-Ponty’s Unique Contribution to Feminism, Critical Race Theory and Disability Studies
10:00 Comments
   Galen Johnson, David Abram, Laura Doyle
10:30 Refreshment Break
11:00 Reply
   Gail Weiss
11:15 Discussion
12:00 Lunch

Final Session, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Moderator
   Constance Fischer
   Professor Emerita of Psychology
   Duquesne University
2:00 David Abram
   Paper: Matter and Agency: On the Chiasm, or Intertwining, Between the Animal and the Animate Earth
3:00 Comments
   Gail Weiss, Laura Doyle, Galen Johnson
3:30 Refreshment Break
4:00 Reply
   David Abram
4:15 Discussion
5:00 Closing Remarks:
   Jeffrey McCurry, Director
   Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center
5:10 Reception
   Room 608, Student Union
Biographies

David Abram
David Abram is a cultural ecologist and geophilosopher who lectures and teaches widely on several continents. He is the award-winning author of *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology* (Pantheon, 2010) and *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World* (Vintage, 1997). Hailed as "revolutionary" by the *Los Angeles Times*, and as "daring" and "truly original" by *Science*, David’s work has helped catalyze the emergence of several new disciplines, including the burgeoning field of ecopsychology. The recipient of the international Lannan Literary Award, as well as fellowships from the Watson and the Rockefeller Foundations, David’s essays on the cultural causes and consequences of environmental disarray are published in numerous scholarly journals, magazines and anthologies. Founder of the Alliance for Wild Ethics (AWE), David lives with his family in the foothills of the southern Rockies.

Laura Doyle
Laura Doyle is Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts—Amherst. A specialist in postcolonial and global studies and literatures, the history of the novel and modernisms, as well as the work of Franz Fanon and Merleau-Ponty, she is the author of the award-winning *Bordering on the Body: The Racial Matrix of Modern Fiction and Culture* (Oxford, 1994) and most recently *Freedom’s Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity, 1640-1940* (Duke, 2008), the editor or co-editor of *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity* (Indiana, 2005) and *Bodies of Resistance: New Phenomenologies of Politics, Agency, and Culture* (Northwestern, 2001). An award-winning teacher, Doyle has also served as Research Professor at the University of Exeter and given the Leverhulme Lectures in England and Ireland.

Galen Johnson
Galen Johnson is Professor of Philosophy and Chair of the Philosophy Department at the University of Rhode Island, where he has taught since 1976. A scholar of Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology, aesthetics and American philosophy, he is the author of *Earth and Sky, History and Philosophy* (Peter Lang, 1989) and *The Retrieval of the Beautiful: Thinking Through Merleau-Ponty’s Aesthetics* (Northwestern, 2010) and the editor or co-editor of *Ontology and Alterity in Merleau-Ponty* (Northwestern, 1990) and *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting* (Northwestern, 1993). Johnson is the Director of the University of Rhode Island Center for the Humanities and the current General Secretary of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle and has lectured at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris on his research.

Gail Weiss
Gail Weiss is Professor and Department Chair of Philosophy and Human Sciences at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. An expert on phenomenology, existentialism, Merleau-Ponty, de Beauvoir, critical race theory and philosophy of literature, Weiss is the author of *Body Images: Embodiment as Intercorporeality* (Routledge, 1999) and *Refiguring the Ordinary* (Indiana, 2008) and editor or co-editor of *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture* (Routledge, 1999), *Thinking the Limits of the Body* (SUNY, 2003), *Feminist Interpretations of Merleau-Ponty* (Penn State, 2006), *Intertwinings: Interdisciplinary Encounters With Merleau-Ponty* (SUNY, 2008) and the special issue of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* on "Ethics of Embodiment" (Summer 2011).

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